AUSTRIAN INFORMATION

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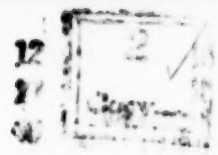

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THE NEW AUSTRIAN EXCHANGE RATES AND REGULATIONS. In its meeting of November 10, the Austrian Cabinet adopted some basic changes in foreign exchange regulations to become effective November 25, 1949. The most important of these new currency regulations and rates follow:

I. Rates: After the above date, the Austrian National Bank will announce in addition to the basic rate a premium rate for the currencies quoted by it.

II. Rates applicable to foreign trade:

a) Exports: exporters will henceforth be permitted to retain control over a flat 60% of their foreign exchange earnings. These so-called "retention quotas" will be credited to them and deposited in foreign currency accounts at the Austrian National Bank, or at any Austrian credit institute duly authorized to deal in foreign currencies. The remaining 40% of this foreign exchange derived from exports will be credited in schillings at the basic rate of 14.40 schillings to the dollar. These basic regulations apply to dollar settlements with foreign countries, as well as to payment procedures with Western Germany. Austrian exporters must dispose of their "retention quotas" within a period of 60 days, on the basis of specific authorizations from the National Bank or offer these currency amounts for sale at the premium rate of exchange, within the same 60-day period, to the Austrian National Bank direct or through the exchange broker handling their account.

b) Imports: all import goods are officially divided into three categories on the basis of their importance to the national economy. Details will be announced shortly.

For each of these three categories of imports the necessary foreign exchange allocations will be made on the basis of the availability of the foreign currency needed, at the following rates:

First category: at the basic rate of 14.40 schillings to the dollar.

Second category: 40% at the basic rate of 14.40 and 60% at the premium rate of 26.00; this amounts to an "effective" transaction rate of 21.36 schillings to the dollar.

Third category: at the premium rate of 26.00 schillings to the dollar.

III. Other transactions involving foreign currencies: all foreign exchange not obtained from exports, including foreign currency earnings from services, such as passenger and freight transportation, patents, licences, pensions, private contributions and the like, as well as all foreign exchange derived from tourism and investments, will be bought by the Austrian National Bank at the premium rate of exchange. Allocations of foreign currency for these same purposes will likewise be made on the basis of the premium rate.

THE NEW EXCHANGE RATES OF THE AUSTRIAN NATIONAL BANK. According to the new regulations the Austrian National Bank has re-evaluated all foreign currencies. Following are some of the new exchange rates (the old rate of exchange is indicated in parentheses):

Basic rates: New York 14,40 (10), London 40.32 (28), Zuerich 334.88 (232.55), Brussels 28.80 (20.00), Paris 4,11 - 1/2 (2,8575), Amsterdam 378,95 (263,16), Prag 28,80 (20,00), Kopenhagen 208,48 (144,78), Oslo 201,60 (140.00), Stockholm 278,26 (193,24).

Premium rates: New York 26.00, London 72,80, Zuerich 604,65, Brussels 52,00, Paris 6,60, Amsterdam 530,55, Kopenhagen 281,45, Oslo 272,15, Stockholm 389,55.

The purchase price of gold has been fixed at 15.394 schillings (10,690 schillings) per fine troy kilo.

BACKGROUND OF THE NEW REGULATIONS. Ever since the liberation in 1945, foreign currency transactions have been subject to government controls. According to these, every exporter had to surrender to the Austrian National Bank all foreign exchange earned by him, for which he was credited with the equivalent amount of schillings at the official rate of 10 to 1. This rate, however, was soon out of step with actual conditions. It became evident, that no large export activity was possible on the basis of such a rate, since in many instances it was not even sufficient to cover production costs. That is why the National Bank had permitted exporters to sell part of their foreign exchange (the so-called "retention quota") to importers at a certain premium above the official rate, providing this premium did not disordinately affect domestic prices. This special permission was granted on the basis of the exporter's own production costs. The rates therefore varied with every business, every firm and in some case, even every transaction. The practical result of all this was, that Austria was making imports, other than those within the frame-work of the Marshall Plan, at an actual foreign exchange rate considerably above the official rate of 10 to 1, which in effect respresented a second rate of exchange. Some transactions were effected at a third rate of exchange, inasmuch exporters were permitted, in individual cases, to sell part of their foreign exchange earnings at a higher then the official rate.

These regulations were no longer adapted to economic realities. After many countries had adopted currency devaluations and after the parliamentary elections of October 9, the right moment had come to institute regulations and rates based on actual conditions. The newly established rates of exchange are therefore primarily a formalization of the existing situation. That is why the price of imports is not expected to increase unduly. Furthermore, the Austrian Government has reached an agreement with the Economic Cooperation Administration, on the basis of which certain vitally important consumers' goods, imported under the Marshall Plan, will be sold to consumers at the same prices as heretofore. Thus, for example, the price of flour, fats, sugar, certain pharmaceuticals, as well as coal, gas and electricity for home use will remain unchanged. The same is true of certain agricultural products imported under the Marshall Plan, such as fodder, seed and fertilizer. On the other hand, the higher rate being granted to exporters for their foreign exchange will undoubtedly provide an incentive for Austrian exports.

Another consequence of the new regulations is that the so-called "retention quotas" have become uniform. All exporters are now permitted to keep 60% of their foreign exchange earnings, enabling them to sell these 60%, insofar as needed by them for legitimite purposes at the premium rate at a foreign exchange market under supervision of the National Bank. This, it is thought, will offer them a greater inducement, and, in some cases, create new possibilities of effecting exports. They will now be able to count on a so-called "effective" rate - based on the average of the official and the premium rates - for their business calculations. With a premium rate of 26, this rate will be 21,36 schillings to the dollar.

On the other hand, it is expected, that no important price changes are likely to occur as a result of the new regulations. However, in order to compensate for a possible increase in the cost of living, plans are being made by the Ministry of Finance for the introduction of a parliamentary bill, which would lower taxes on wages as well as reduce income and corporation taxes. It is believed, that these taxes will be reduced by some 20% as of January 1, 1950. The ECA Mission in Austria has also given assurance, that ERP counterpart funds would be released liberally in order to strengthen Austrian economy and assure full employment.

Finally, as a result of the new exchange regulations foreign currency derived from tourists will be less likely to find its way into the black market, and more likely to reach the National Bank which will then allocate it on the basis of national economic needs.

THE MEMBERS OF THE NEWLY ELECTED AUSTRIAN LOWER CHAMBER (NATIONALRAT).
The following is a complete list of the 165 members of the new Austrian House of Representatives:

OeVP (Peoples Party) 77 members:
Erwin Altenburger, Karl Aichhorn, Ing. Leopold Babitsch, Michael Bachinger, Franz Bauer, Wilhelm Bleyer, Dr. Fritz Bock, Josef Boeck-Greissau, Karl Brunner, Theodor Cerny, Josef Dengler, Josef Dienbauer, Anton Ehrenfried, Karl Eichinger, Johann Endl, Josef Ernecker, Karl Ettlinger, Alois Fehringer, Ing. Dr. Leopold Figl, Josef Fink, Dipl. Ing. Pius Fink, Leopold Fischer, Anton Frisch, Georg Franz, Ferdinand Geisslinger, Anton Gindler, Dr. Alfons Gorbach, Ferdin. Graf, Isidor Griessner, Dr. Karl Gruber, Franz Grubhofer, Dr. Franz Gschnitzer, Dr. Oswald Haberzettl, Edmund Hainisch, Ing. Eduard Hartmann, Johann Hattmannsdorfer, Franz Haunschmidt, Josef Hilgarth, Fritz Hinterdorfer, Ing. Emmerich Hirmann, Josef Hummer, Dr. Felix Hurdes, Gustav Kapsreiter, Ing. August Kargl, Ing. Franz Kortschak, Franz Kranebitter, Dr. Peter Krauland, Josef Kraus, Franz Krippner, Johann Kuchner, Leopold Kunschak, Karl Lakowitsch, Eduard Ludwig, Erwin Machunze, Dr. Alfred Maleta, Josef Marchsteiner, Dr. Eugen Margaretha, Josef Matt, Hans Maurer, Franz Mayerhofer, Fritz Mitterhauser, Josef Mitterndorfer, Franz Muellner, Viktor Muellner, Johann Nagl, Andreas Nedwal, Dr. Alexander Nemecz, Franz Prinke, Ing. Julius Raab, Hermann Rainer, Grete Rehor, Josef Reiter, Josef Reither, Anton Reitzl, Hans Roth, Dr. Rupert Roth, Hans Sassmann, Dr. Otto Scheff, Alois Scheibenreif, Karl Schmalzbauer, Franz Schoeberl, Dr. Albert Schoepf, Friedrich Schwarzott, Johann Schweinhammer, Hans Sebinger, Georg Seidl, Lola Solar, Franz Stangler, Johann Steinboeck, Otto Steinegger, Dr. Ernst Strachwitz, Ing. Franz Strobl, Josef Strommer, Berthold Stuergkh, Johann Tesar, Leopold Thurner, Dr. Lujo Toncic, Hans Vollmann, Michael Walla, Otto Wallig, Josef Wallner, Johann Waltner, Karl Wegerer, Johann Weidenholzer, Lois Weinberger, Anton Weindl, Johann Zach, Johann Zeyer.

SPOe (Socialists) 67 members:
Franz Adelpoller, Josef Afritsch, Edmund Aigner, Gottfried Albrecht, Antonie Alt, Rudolf Appel, Johann Astl, Hans Bock, Johann Boehm, Karl Czernetz, Ludwig Dinstl, Hans Draxler, Max Eibegger, Ferdinand Fageth, Ferdinanda Flossmann, Emmerich Froemmel, Leopold Fronauer, Michael Fruehwirth, Karl Fuerstenhofer, Karl Gfoellner, Johann Giegerl, Franz Glaserer, Glinz, Rudolf Gschweidl, Philomena Haas, Dr. Ferdinand Haeuslmayer, Franz Heigelmayr, Oskar Helmer, Friedrich Hillegeist, Ignaz Hinterleithner, Edmund Holzfeind, Karl Honay, Alfred Horn, Maria Jacobi, Josef Jirava, Rosa Jochmann, Harry Jodlbauer, Franz Jonas, Johann Kaps, Franz Kinkor, Franz Koci, Theodor Koerner, Dr. Ernst Koref, Ludwig Kostroun, Franziska Kraemer, Paula Kratky, Marie Kren, Karl Kysela, Herrmann Lackner, Hedwig Lehnert, Walter Leibetseder, Franz Loibl, Konrad Loetsch, Karl Maisel, Rudolf Marchner, Bruno Marek, Karl Mark, Anton Matourek, Alois Mentasti, Dr. Alfred Migsch, Leopold Mistinger, Wilhelmine Moik, Dr. Neubauer, Dr. Max Neugebauer, Frieda Noedl, Franz Novy, Franz Olah, Max Opravil, Viktor Petschnik, Hubert Pfoch, Dr. Bruno Pittermann, Adolf Planek, Antonie Platzer, Josef Pleyl, Johann Poelzer, Marianne Pollak, Josefa Popp, Helene Potetz, Kurt Preussler, Otto Probst, Gabriele Proft, Anton Proksch, Edmund Reismann, Johann Resch, Martin Rom, Paul Rosenberger, Barbara Schachenbacher, Dr. Adolf Schaerf, Johann Schiller, Pius Schneeberger, Karl Seitz, Rudolf Sigmund, Rudolf Singer, Felix Slavik, Andreas Stampler, Josef Steiner, Dr. Wilhelm Stemmer, Peter Strasser, Wilhelm Svetelsky, Johann Swoboda, Leopold Thaller, Paul Truppe, Dr. Otto Tschadek, Vinzenz Uebeleis, Robert Uhlir, Josef Voithofer, Ing. Karl Waldbrunner, Paula Wallisch, Hans Weber, Otto Weber, Adolf Weigelt, Eduard Weikhart, Sepp Wendl, Heinrich Widmayer, Josef Wiedermann, Alois Wimberger, Hans Winter, Franz Witzmann, Leopold Wolf, Dr. Leopold Zechner, Rupert Zechtl.

KdU (Union of Independents) 16 members:
Dr. Buchberger, Gerhard Ebenbichler, Dr. Anton Gasselich, Alois Gruber, Karl Hartleb, Oskar Huemer, Franz Klautzer, Dr. Rudolf Kopf, Dr. Herbert A. Kraus, Prof. Anton Neumann, Thomas Neuwirth, Univ. Prof. Dr. Helfried Pfeiffer, Hans Rammer, Dr. Viktor Reimann, Dr. Robert Scheuch, Dr. Fritz Stueber.

KPOe (Leftist Bloc) 5 members:
Viktor Elser, Ernst Fischer, Franz Honner, Johann Koplenig, Erwin Scharf.

PARTY CLUBS CONSTITUTED IN AUSTRIAN PARLIAMENT. The following members of the Lower Chamber have been appointed chairmen and deputy chairmen of the party clubs in the newly elected Austrian parliament:

People's Party: chairman - Julius Raab; deputy chairmen- Dr. Peter Krauland and Pius Fink. Socialist Party: chairmen - Dr. Adolf Schaerf, Oskar Helmer, Gabriele Proft, Dr. Bruno Pittermann. Union of Independents: chairman - Dr. Herbert Kraus; deputy chairmen - Karl Hartleb and Dr. Viktor Reimann.

These parliamentary clubs have always been of traditional importance as party caucuses in which members of the same party meet to decide how they will vote on specific legislation. Because of their insufficient number of seats (5), the Communists have waived their right to formally constitute a club of their own.

AUSTRIA REPRESENTED AT NETHERLANDS CATHOLIC PEOPLE'S PARTY CONGRESS. The Catholic political parties of France, Belgium, Italy, Germany and Austria sent representatives to the Congress of the Catholic People's Party of the Netherlands which was recently held in Utrecht. In his address to the European representatives, Dr. Felix Hurdes, general secretary of the Austrian People's Party and Minister of Education, declared that the Christian-Democratic parties, united in close collaboration, were steering their policy on a middle-of-the-road course between extreme individualism, on the one hand, and oppressive collectivism, on the other.

AUSTRIAN DELEGATION TO F.A.O. CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON. The Austrian delegation to the 5th annual conference of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, which opened in Washington on November 21, was composed of Dr. Rudolf Phillip, head of the Austrian FAO committee, Dr. Bauer of the Ministry of Agriculture and Dr. Duschek of the Linz Agricultural and Forestry Council. The conference discussed a number of important questions, including "technical assistance to the economic development of under-developed areas".

AUSTRIAN ASSETS IN EASTERN AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE. When Austria regains her full sovereignty after ratification of the State Treaty she will also be in a position to press her claims for the recovery of most Austrian assets now located abroad by way of bilateral negotiations with the governments concerned. With very few exceptions, the Western powers have already released all Austrian property in their territory, in anticipation of the signing of the Treaty. However, Austrian assets in eastern and southeastern Europe, whose total value is considerable because of Austria's close connections with these areas in the past, have not yet been returned to their rightful owners.

Approximate estimates put the total value of Austrian immovables in Poland at about 6 million dollars, from which some 10% must be deducted as a result of war damage. Austrian movables in that country are valued at about 5 million dollars. The zloty devaluation, on a 1:40 basis, however, has reduced the available assets to a minimum. Austrian immovables in Bulgaria have been valued at 1 million dollars; movable property is likewise estimated at 1 million dollars. Austrian immovable property in Rumania amounts to about 2.5 million dollars and movable assets to some 5 million dollars. In Hungary, Austria owns about 20 million dollars' worth of immovables and 4 million dollars' worth of movable assets. Currency devaluations in the above-mentioned three countries have reduced the value of bonds, securities and bank assets to a minimum. Austrian property assets in Yugoslavia are estimated at 30 million dollars, but, under the State Treaty, Austria will be obligated to relinquish to the Yugoslav state all of its assets in that country and compensate the owners herself.

Austria's largest assets are situated in Czechoslovakia, with immovables valued at 150 million dollars and movable assets, including bank deposits, at about 180 million dollars.

SUCCESSOR TO GENERAL BALMER ASSUMES OFFICE. Brig. Gen. James C. Fry succeeded Brig. Gen. Jesmond D. Balmer as Deputy United States High Commissioner to Austria. General Fry is a former Commander of the 88th Infantry Division and previously served on the General Staff in Washington.

REORGANIZATION OF AUSTRIA'S ERP ADMINISTRATION. Austria's administrative machinery for handling Marshall Plan aid has been reorganized into a centralized agency under Professor Wilhelm Taucher, a former Minister

of Trade, the Austrian Federal Government announced on December 2. The new department will be directly responsible to Chancellor Leopold Figl and administer all ERP activities formerly divided among various ministries and commissions.

Dr. Taucher, who is a professor of political economy at the University of Graz, was for a time head of the Austrian mission to the Office of European Cooperation in Paris.

According to APA (Austria Press Agency) plans for a centralization of Austrian Marshall Plan aid machinery were conceived long ago and communicated already in July to the head of the ECA mission in Vienna, Mr. Clyde King, by the Federal Chancellor. The formation of the new Austrian cabinet which resulted in the elimination of a number of ministries and a redistribution of administrative responsibilities made the realization of this reform possible. The reorganization is in no way connected with certain purchases of ERP goods in the United States which have recently been discussed in the press.

AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT APPOINTS INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE. On November 23, the Austrian Parliament, on a motion introduced by Deputy Julius Raab, appointed a six member committee consisting of three representatives of the People's Party (Deputies Boeck-Greissau, Dr. Maleta and Ing. Hartmann) and three Socialists (Deputies Dr. Pittermann, Proksch and Weickhardt) to investigate certain charges made against the New York representatives of a number of non-governmental Austrian organizations in connection with the procurement of ERP goods.

Article 53 of the Austrian Constitution requires courts and all executive departments to comply with the requests of a Parliamentary investigating committee conducting an official inquiry. All government agencies must produce their records for review, if requested to do so by the committee. Parliamentary investigating committees conduct their hearings on the basis of the Code of Criminal Procedures, and accordingly, may summon witnesses to testify under oath, release government officials from their oath of secrecy and compel them to make public depositions.

328.2 MILLION DOLLARS OF ECA FUNDS RELEASED TO AUSTRIA. The total sum of funds released to Austria since the beginning of the Marshall Plan on April 3, 1948, amounted to 328.2 million dollars as of October 31, 1949, it was recently announced by the ECA mission in Vienna. Of this total, 210.6 million were allocated for food and agricultural products, 84.5 million for industrial equipment and 33.1 million for payment of overseas freight charges.

ERP FUNDS RELEASED FOR WORKERS HOUSING. For the first time, the Austrian government has included a sum of 50 million schillings for the construction of housing for workers and employees of important industrial, mining and power enterprises, in its allocation of schillings released from ERP counterpart funds. The ECA mission in Austria has also released 30 million schillings for this purpose to be distributed as credits for public building associations which are constructing the dwellings for the enterprises. The loans are to be paid off in 2% annuities (1% for interest and 1% for redemption) over a period of 70 years.

INCREASED AUSTRIAN TAX RECEIPTS FOR 1949. Official statistics on government tax receipts for the period of January 1 to September 30 show that the Austrian state collected 2,101,183,000 schillings in direct taxes, or 761,818,000 schillings more than had been anticipated by the 1949 national budget. The increase came primarily from income, corporation and trade taxes, that is to say from taxes paid by economically independent groups.

Transaction or turnover taxes were also higher than expected, although sales taxes did not reach the estimated figure. Total government receipts during the first nine months of this year amounted to 4,325,678,000 schillings or 736,032,000 schillings more than had been expected.

FINAL REPORT FROM THE MINISTRY OF ELECTRIC ENERGY. The Federal Ministry of Electric Energy, which is in the process of being dissolved by the new government as a result of the October elections, recently released its final report of operations. Of particular interest, in addition to the various single projects and those works which have already been completed, is the overall 10-year construction plan which contemplates

an expense of 2 billion schillings by the end of 1952. Of this amount, 1.6 billion will be supplied from ERP Counterpart funds. Ten power stations have already been put into operation during the first two years of the plan. Work on the Tauern power plant of Kaprun, in the Grossglockner area, has been proceeding in high gear since the spring of 1948.

The question of cost was paramount in the handling of these projects. Construction schedules, costs and materials were therefore planned with utmost care by a group of specialists concerned with the projects, in order to assure sound business methods and rational procedures of work. These methods were so succesful that in 1948 productivity had increased by 30 to 50% over the previous year.

The report also discussed the price of electricity which had remained far below the general price level. Compared to what it was in 1937, the electricity index increased to 230, although construction costs on the power stations rose by 400 to 500% during the same period.

IMPORTANT AUSTRO-YUGOSLAV TRADE AGREEMENT SIGNED. The new Austro-Yugoslav trado agreement signed in Belgrade on November 12 covers a trade volume of 28 million dollars in each direction.

The leading items on Yugoslavia's export list are: 360,000 tons of iron ore for a value of 3 million dollars, metal and iron alloys for a value of 1 million dollars, hemp for a value of 2.8 million dollars, pulpwood for a value of 2 million dollars, and fruits and vegetables for a value of 1.6 million dollars. In addition, Austria is to receive 1,000 tons of tobacco, costing 2 million dollars, 1 million dollars' worth of cattle for slaughter and 2 million dollars' worth of corn.

In exchange, Austria will supply Yugoslavia with 2 million dollars' worth of paper, 2.5 million dollars' worth of magnesite, 3 to 3.5 million dollars' worth of rolling mill stock, 3 million dollars' worth of steel and 1 million dollars' worth of machinery. Moreover, Yugoslavia will receive 5 million dollars' worth of secondary items, such as tools, salt, 8,000 bicycles, knitted and woven goods, as well as other textiles.

The new agreement is all the more significant, because it provides Austria with an important source of food and raw materials, as well as a market for the export of Austrian products difficult to place at this time.

SATISFACTORY PROGRESS OF RECONSTRUCTION LOAN. Although no official figures are yet available, it is unofficially estimated that subscriptions to the Austrian reconstruction loan have reached a total of 250 million schillings. A fifth of this sum came from cash subsriptions, with the remaining 200 million schillings being subscribed for the acquisition of tax-prefered government bonds.

The reconstruction loan was floated last spring for the purpose of ascertaining the volume of Austria's domestic capital. A further purpose was to show that the country was not dependent on foreign help alone. The loan is but one of the facets of the Austrian government's economic policy which is aimed at making Austria self-sufficient by 1952 when the Marshall Plan ends.

INCREASE IN AUSTRIA'S TOURIST TRADE. Erwin Ortner, director of the Austrian Tourist Promotion Office, recently released the following figures on tourist attendence in Austria during the past nine months:

From December 1, 1948, to August 31, 1949, foreign tourists availed themselves of 662,387 single 24-hour reservations, as compared to 94,120 reservations for the period from December 1, 1947, to December 1, 1948. During the 9 months covered by the report, Austria obtained 11.5 million schillings in foreign exchange, as compared to only 6.1 million in the previous year. This represents a seven-fold increase in single 24-hour reservations and an almost two-fold increase in the amount of foreign exchange obtained. The average daily total of money spent by foreign tourists (for hotel reservations, travelling costs and incidentals) is estimated to have been 80 schillings per visitor. The total income derived from the tourist trade amounted to 53 million schillings.

Thirty percent of all reservations were made by tourists from Switzerland, 17% by tourists from Great Britain, 15% by tourists from Belgium and 10% by tourists from the United States. This figure represents a fourth of the number of Americans who visited Austria before the war.

OPENING OF AUSTRIAN ART EXHIBITION. Approximately 10,000 invited guests attended the opening of the Austrian Art Exhibition at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. on November 20th. Among them were Chief Justice and Mrs. Fred M. Vinson, Justice and Mrs. Felix Frankfurter, Justice and Mrs. Stanley F. Reed, as well as many distinguished members of the Cabinet, the Congress and the Diplomatic Corps. On that first afternoon, not less than 41,725 persons - notables, art lovers and just people - jammed into the National Gallery. On Saturday, November 26th, Miss Margaret Truman accompanied by Madame Helen Traubel and other friends visited the exhibition. Another special showing was arranged for the former Secretary of State and Mrs. Cordell Hull.

During the first week the number of visitors reached the figure of approximately 200,000.

The opening of the Austrian Art Exhibition was preceded by a luncheon given by Mr. David F. Finley, at which Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson was the ranking guest.

At this occasion the Austrian Minister, Dr. Ludwig Kleinwaechter, said that the collection had been lent for exhibit in the United States as a gesture of goodwill. "We Austrians owe it to the memory of the late General Patton, that great American soldier, to recall on this occasion that it was he who saved the Austrian art treasures from destruction and who had them returned to the Austrian people", Dr. Kleinwaechter stated. In concluding, Dr. Kleinwaechter expressed his confidence that these collections, which will be shown in many parts of this great continent, will contribute towards the strengthening of friendly ties between the two countries.

Secretary of State Dean Acheson, a member of the Gallery's board of trustees, who was unable to be present at the opening, expressed in a letter "his sincere appreciation, and the gratitude of the American people", for the opportunity to see the famous collections.

"Americans", the letter of the Secretary of State continues, "have long been familiar with the music and literature of Austria, but the opportunity to know and appreciate at first hand other aspects of its culture was until now limited chiefly to those Americans who could travel to Austria. More Americans will, because of the effort that has been made by the Governments of both countries, now be able to learn more about Austria and her patronage of the arts, and appreciate more fully the great contribution which that country can make and has made to world civilization."

"The Opening of the Austrian Exhibition coincides with the effort now being made to restore to Austria the political freedom and independence basic to the development of a true national culture and to an unrestricted participation in international cultural exchange. The exhibit is proof of Austria's past merits on behalf of the sponsorship of the finest that the world has to offer in the field of fine arts. I hope that Austria's future efforts may be just as splendid and that long before the exhibit is returned, a free, independent and sovereign nation will be waiting to receive it".

LONDON PLANS EXHIBIT OF MODERN AUSTRIAN ART. The St. George Gallery in London is planning an early exhibition of contemporary Austrian paintings, following the overwhelming popular success of the recent exhibition of "Art Treasures from Vienna", which have now arrived in the United States and will be shown in four major cities here. The London exhibition, for which the Austrian Ministry of Education promised financial assistance, will include some 30 oil paintings and an equal number of water colors, as well as drawings, of the less extreme school of modern art, as represented by such painters as Prof. Boeckl, Andersen and Pauser.

AUSTRIAN SCIENTIST TO CONDUCT DEEP-SEA RESEARCH IN RED SEA. Dr. Hans Hass, of Vienna, arrived in Suakin, Port Sudan, on the Red Sea, at the end of November in order to complete preparations for an important deep-sea expedition early in 1950. The purpose of the expedition will be to investigate unknown forms of deep-sea life and evolve rational methods of exploiting underwater resources, which are universally accessible. A motion picture of cultural and documentary character will be made during the expedition.

Dr. Hass plans to use new scientific instruments, some of which are of his own invention. One of these is the "Batyophtal", a type of deep-sea eye which, when lowered, is operated by remote control. The

same is true of the motion picture cameras which are enclosed in the "eye"-unit, and which can be released for filming by the observers on board ship when anything of interest is discovered through the extended visual mechanism. Novel electrical fishing devices with special bait will also be used.

NEW DIRECTOR OF AUSTRIAN NATIONAL LIBRARY APPOINTED. Dr. Josef Stumvoll was recently appointed General Director of the Austrian National Library. Born in 1902 in Baden, near Vienna, Dr. Stumvoll was the Austrian representative at the "Deutsche Buecherei" in Leipzig from 1927 to 1933. From 1933 to 1937 he organized the University library in Ankara. Since 1946 Dr. Stumvoll had been Assistant General Director of the National Library. He also spent several months in England and the United States to study modern library methods.

AUSTRIAN STUDENTS PRESENT FOLK SONGS AND DANCES ON NORTH AMERICAN TOUR. The Austrian students who arrived in this country last month for a seven months tour during which they will present to the American people the folk songs, dances and folklore of Austria have begun their nation-wide tour. That their offerings will interest Americans was predicted by the reception the group's performances received in New York, and at Yale and Harvard universities, where the audiences were overwhelmed by the beautiful old peasant melodies, intricate alpine figure dances and the brilliant peasant costumes, many of which are either family heirlooms or have been lent by various Austrian museums. Until the end of the year, the group will be touring the Middle West and the Northeast, after which they will tour the South, the West Coast and then return via the northern states. A few of the cities where the group will perform are Philadelphia, Atlanta, New Orleans, Memphis, Miami, Dallas, San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Salt Lake City, St. Louis, Chicago, Milwaukee and Minneapolis. Should any of our readers be interested in arranging for a performance by this unique and highly colorful group in their city, it is suggested they contact the leader of the group, Dr. Oskar F. Bock, c/o the National Student's Association, 18 Brattle Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

CONFERENCE OF AUSTRIAN BISHOPS IN VIENNA. On November 16 and 17, Austria's Bishops held a conference in Vienna over which Cardinal Innitzer presided. The conference dealt with a series of current questions concerning the church. It was decided to request the government to introduce a parliamentary bill for the protection of youth against immoral and unwholesome influences. In support of the papal decree against Communism, the bishops agreed to release a pastoral letter to the faithful and instructions to the clergy. The conference also heard reports on the Church's land settlement drive. The bishops were told that the Archdiocese of Vienna had so far contributed 350 hectares and the Archdiocese of Graz 133 hectares of land to the settlement program.

HEADS OF AUSTRIAN PROTESTANT CHURCHES APPOINTED. Dr. Gerhard May was confirmed as Bishop of the Lutheran Church and appointed head of the Supreme Church Council at the November meeting of the Protestant General Synod in Vienna. J. Karl Egli was confirmed as National Superintendent of the Reformed Church. The General Synod represents both the Lutheran and Calvinist denominations. Both groups formed the Supreme Church Council for the achievement of common goals and for joint external representation.

The Lutheran Church in Austria has 131 congregations and 400,000 worshippers, the Reformed Church 6 congregations and 20,000 faithful.

ROMANESQUE CHURCH PORTAL DISCOVERED IN HEILIGENKREUZ. An old Romanesque portal was recently discovered in the southern aisle of the collegiate basilica of Heiligenkreuz during the restoration work at the church. The portal had been walled up for the past 200 years and it was found that it led to a small chamber which had also been walled in when the prelature was rebuilt during the Baroque period. The rediscovered chamber will be used as a funeral chapel. It is believed that this part of the monastery belongs to the original foundations, which date back to the middle of the 12th century. The portal itself, just as the west facade, was built in the middle of the 12th century and is characteristic of the golden age of Romanesque architecture. The beautiful collegiate church in the Wienerwald has thus been enriched by yet another rare architectural treasure.

AUSTRIAN BROADCASTING COMPANY TO FEATURE MAHLER CYCLE. During the 1949/50 season, the Vienna radio station "Ravag" will broadcast all of Gustav Mahler's symphonies, partly from live studio concerts and partly from the "Musikvereinsaal". The Mahler cycle began on October 9 with a performance of the 1st Symphony by the Vienna Smphony Orchestra under the direction of Hans Swarowsky. The 8th Symphony, which will be relayed from the "Musikervereinsaal", will be sponsored jointly by the Concert Hall Society and the Society of the Friends of Music.

PAUL HINDEMITH TO CONDUCT BACH FESTIVAL CONCERT IN VIENNA NEXT JUNE. The Austrian Society of the Friends of Music is organizing an imposing Bach Festival from June 1st - 15th, 1950 in commemoration of the 200th Anniversary of Johann Sebastian Bach's death. One of the highlights of the Festival will be a concert conducted by the world-famous modern composer Paul Hindemith. In 1947, Hindemith had earned widespread public acclaim at the music festival sponsored by the Vienna Concert Hall Society. Last year too, his concert triumphs had been the talk of musical Vienna. That is one of the reasons why his appearance at the Bach Festival is expected to be one of the great attractions of this important musical event. Another is that Hindemith is considered a leading authority on Bach and one of his greatest living interpreters. His orchestral concert at the Festival will certainly include one of the Brandenbourg Concertos, which Hindemith will conduct from the viola stand, and possibly the Concerto for Four Pianos.

RECONSTRUCTION OF VIENNA STATE OPERA HOUSE PROGRESSING SATISFACTORILY. After an interruption of six months, work has been resumed on the reconstruction of the Vienna State Opera house. By Christmas, the front of the building on the Ringstrasse will again present its former appearance. The covered passage with the Schwindt frescoes, has already been repainted, and an accessible concrete terrace, which can be used during the intermissions, is being built over them.

The new roof, which is also nearly finished, will be covered with sheet copper, in accordance with the original plans drawn up by the architects von Siccardsburg and van der Nuell who designed the structure. The back of the building suffered most from bomb damage and it is hoped that new outer walls up to roof level can be erected by next spring.

Work on the new stage, which will be one of the largest in the world, will begin only at a later date. The whole stage area will be completely renovated and modernized, and will include a lateral stage in the wings, as well as greatly expanded facilities in the rear of the stage.

NEW BRIDGES BEING BUILT IN VIENNA. Construction work has already begun on the permanent Aspern bridge which will have a width of about 98 feet, with a 63 foot wide lane for vehicular traffic and two 14 foot wide sidewalks for pedestrian traffic. The bridge will also have a streetcar traffic island for the city-bound lines. Preparations are also being made for the construction of a steel bridge over the tracks of the "Westbahn", to replace the present emergency bridge. Actual construction is scheduled to begin next spring at the latest.

GRAND OPENING OF NEW LINZ RAILROAD STATION. On October 10, the new 16 million schilling central railroad station of Linz, Upper Austria, was formally opened for public use by the Austrian Federal Minister of Communications. The 820 foot long station is the most modern in Austria and includes the latest facilities. In addition to its comfortable waiting rooms, the station has a motion picture theatre, a stage and a convention hall. A monumental fountain, equipped with concealed electrical devices for colored lighting effects, has been erected in front of the station building.

SALZBURG PLANS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL. The city and state of Salzburg are planning to inaugurate a two-week international film festival immediately following next year's music festival as a permanent yearly event. The projected Salzburg Film Festival will be coupled with an international film congress. It is hoped that professional film people, such as producers, directors, actors, etc., will participate in the congress and thereby give greater prominence to the film festival itself. A leading Austrian director, possibly Willi Forst or G.W. Pabst, is expected to be entrusted with the organization of the international event.

LIFE OF POPE BONIFACE VIII TO BE FILMED DURING HOLY YEAR. G.W. Pabst, the well-known Austrian film director, is reported to have been engaged by Italy's second largest film production company (ICET) to make a film of the life of Pope Boniface VIII in Italy. Boniface VIII was the first Pope to institute the Holy Year. Production on the film will start at the end of January and is scheduled to be completed by fall.

VIENNESE ZITHER VIRTUOSO PERFORMS FOR BRITISH ROYAL FAMILY. The Viennese zither virtuoso, Anton Karas, who aquired world renown for his background music in the Alexander Korda picture "The Third Man", gave a special performance on November 17 for King George and Queen Elizabeth. Karas has been in England on a four month engagement at the Empress Club. His rendition of "Song Without Words", which he gave in the above film, has already sold 300,000 records. Following his London engagement, Karas will make a guest tour in the United States.

VIENNA BOYS CHOIR TO GIVE TWO CONCERTS IN NEW YORK. The famous Vienna Boys Choir, which is now touring the United States and Canada, will give two concerts in New York's Town Hall at the end of the year. The first is scheduled for 3 p.m. on December 31, and the second, for January 1 at 8.40 p.m.

U.S. FORCES IN AUSTRIA LAUNCH CHRISTMAS DRIVE FOR NEEDY AUSTRIANS. Lt. General Geoffrey Keyes, Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Forces in Austria, has again launched a Christmas charity drive for needy Austrian families, it was officially announced in Vienna. The drive is designed to promote contributions of food, clothing and money from Americans living in the United States.

In support of this drive a special program arranged by "CARE" and featuring the Vienna Boys Choir will be broadcast over most stations of the NBC network on December 22nd. In New York this program will be heard over NBC from 11.30 p.m. to midnight.

EVERY SIXTEENTH VIENNESE AN ALIEN. Of Vienna's 1,744,865 inhabitants, 102,732 - or 6% - are aliens, according to an announcement by the city's Office of Alien Registration. Four percent are "Volksdeutsche" (persons of German origin formerly residing outside of Germany and Austria - Editor.) from Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Poland, Rumania, Czechoslovakia and Hungary; 1-1/2% are foreign-speaking aliens, mostly from Czechoslovakia and Hungary; and the remaining 1/2% are Germans from the former Reich.

In Upper Austria, out of a population of close to one million, there are 140.744 registered aliens most of whom are "Volksdeutsche". A number of these are emigrating illegally to Western Germany.

AUSTRIA SCORES DOUBLE SOCCER VICTORY OVER YUGOSLAV TEAM. Austria's national soccer team triumphed over Yugoslavia's top eleven in Belgrade on November 13. The Austrians won 5 to 2 with Decker and Huber responsible for three and two goals respectively. Although the Yugoslavs had been favored to win, the clever play of the Austrians assured them a well-earned victory. In the B-team encounter between the two countries which was played in Vienna, the Austrians won by 3 to 1.

CORRECTION. In the last issue of the Austrian Information Bulletin (No. 19 of November 21, 1949), it was erroneously stated that the Karl-Franzens University, which had been approved for study under the G.I. Bill of Rights by the U.S. Veterans Administration, was located in Salzburg. The university is situated in Graz.

FOREIGN GUEST TOUR OF VIENNA ICE SHOW. After its planned guest appearances in Liège, Antwerp, The Hague and Amsterdam, the well-known Vienna ice-revue ensemble will present its colorful ice pageant in Switzerland, Italy and Germany. In addition to its picturesque costumes and excellent choreography, the group features Eva Pawlik, the Austrian who won last year's European skating championship.

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GRAND CENTRAL
STATION